

Child Care & Early Education RESEARCH CONNECTIONS

Developmental Screening and Assessment

Young children's development during the first five years of life is rapid and varied between children and across domains (social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and linguistic) within a child. Early and frequent screening ensures children's healthy growth and development. Using reliable, valid, and appropriate screening tools provides important information to ensure children are meeting critical developmental milestones and may detect developmental issues for further evaluation, early intervention and treatment.

This **Topic of Interest** highlights resources on developmental screening and assessment from the *Research Connections* collection that provide research-based information on: the critical elements of developmental screening and available tools, policy strategies to support developmental screening, and use of screening and assessment data to inform individualized learning plans in early care and education settings.

Developmental Screening: Critical Elements and Available Tools

The following resources describe the purpose and components of developmental screening, as well as the differences between screening and assessment. They also highlight the importance of selecting screening tools that provide valid and reliable measures of development and provide information on available tools.

- [Early childhood developmental screening: A compendium of measures for children ages birth to five \(OPRE, 2014\)](#)
- [Understanding and choosing assessments and developmental screeners for young children ages 3-5: Profiles of selected measures: Final report \(OPRE, 2011\)](#)
- [Developmental screening and assessment instruments with an emphasis on social and emotional development for young children ages birth through five \(National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center, 2008\)](#)



Policy Strategies to Support Developmental Screening

The following resource identifies state policies, financing initiatives, and community collaborations that can support consistent and reliable developmental screening services for young children. In particular, it emphasizes the importance of easy access to developmental screening services for both families and professionals and discusses ways to improve and expand access.

- [First steps for early success: State strategies to support developmental screening in early childhood settings \(Center for Law and Social Policy, 2014\)](#)

Using Screening & Assessment Information to Guide Practice

The following resource provides guidance on appropriate procedures for implementing screening and assessment, particularly with very young children, as well as ideas for using the resulting data in program planning and practice.

- [Developmental screening, assessment, and evaluation: Key elements for individualizing curricula in Early Head Start programs \(Early Head Start National Resource Center\)](#)

Also see *Research Connections'* bibliography, [Response to Intervention and Other Approaches for Using Ongoing Assessment to Guide Individualized Instruction in Early Education: A Key Topic Resource List](#).

Additional Resources

Explore resources in the *Research Connections* collection related to developmental screening and assessment, including [updated search results](#).

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Last updated: June 2015

Research Connections is a partnership between the National Center for Children in Poverty at the Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, and the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research at the Institute for Social Research, the University of Michigan, supported by a grant from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation in the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.